

VZCZCXRO9850  
RR RUEHBC RUEHDA RUEHDE RUEHIHL RUEHKUK  
DE RUEHGB #0079/01 0111331  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 111331Z JAN 08  
FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5174  
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0113

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 000079

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: VENICE COMMUNIQUE TEXT ON ARTICLE 140

[¶1.](#) During a January 9 meeting with Ambassador Crocker, Italian Ambassador to Iraq Maurizio Melani mentioned a December 18-22 conference in Venice focused on Article 140. He noted that the conference included participation by members of the Iraqi Council of Representatives and Kurdish National Assembly, and passed the conference's final communique to the Ambassador. Text of the communique is below.

[¶2.](#) Begin text:

Venice Final Communique adopted

Upon the invitation of the International Alliance for Justice, Mr. Bakhtiar Amin and No Peace Without Justice, in cooperation with the Iraqi National Assembly, the Kurdistan National Assembly-Iraq, and with the support of the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, an International Conference on Diverse Cities and Dispute Areas was convened on 18-22 December 2007 in the historic and auspicious surroundings of the city of Venice.

The Conference gathered Deputy Speakers and Members of both the Iraqi Parliament and the Kurdistan Parliament, representatives of their various political groupings, Governors, and representatives of Provincial and City administrators in Iraq, together with the experts and scholars from diverse and disputed areas around the world.

The Conference built on the solid foundations of the outcomes of the previous discussions on Practical Federalism in Iraq held in Venice on 18-26 July 2006, in Erbil, Kurdistan-Iraq on 10-16 July 2007 and in Rome on 26-27 September 2007, also convened by the International Alliance for Justice and No Peace Without Justice.

Discussions were conducted in a spirit of mutual respect, objective analysis, dialogue and friendliness, and were underpinned by a shared commitment to the best interests of Iraq as a whole, with a view to discussing and resolving complex issues by taking into account the widest variety of positions and interests.

Within this constructive atmosphere, participants discussed many of the problems associated with settling the political status of disputed areas, and considered how the foundations for long-term stability and prosperity might be built through the careful and committed management of local diversity.

With reference to these discussions, and to the opinions submitted and presented, participants agreed upon the following recommendations:

[¶1.](#) The existence of ethnic, religious, sectarian and cultural diversities creates the necessity to believe in it and respect it.

[¶2.](#) Acknowledge that the problem in Kirkuk is its self

determination. It,s a real problem that requires a solution based on democracy principle, respect of human rights and loyalty to Iraq within a new democratic, federal and unified system.

¶3. The problem must be divided, and a solution must be found at the satisfaction of all parties.

¶4. Adopt dialogue, commit to national peace, reject violence and threats in all its forms, and adopt peaceful methods to solve problems which should be the basis for any solution. No deviation should be allowed, under any circumstances.

¶5. Request the Iraqi political forces and groups to take their historical responsibilities to achieve a real political agreement that guarantees rights for all components of the Iraqi people with its different sects and ethnicities.

¶6. The Kirkuk administration should be jointly administered between the different ethnicities of the city: Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen, and Chaldo-Assyrians.

¶7. Awareness should be expanded in the fields of tolerance, federalism, by raising the facts of the present, while past injustice should only remembered as lessons to avoid repeating such injustice, reject disagreements, and promote peaceful coexistence.

¶8. Find suitable methods to strengthen friendship and relations of love between different ethnicities in disputed areas, and disseminate the spirit of tolerance and coexistence in those areas.

¶9. The comprehensive aspect of article 140 of the Iraqi

BAGHDAD 00000079 002 OF 002

Constitution must be stressed in its two paragraphs, one and two.

¶10. The need for more transparency in solving article 140 of the constitution should be stressed.

¶11. Article 140 is the basis to deal with the problem. Providing the appropriate atmosphere is the method to achieve the solution as per this article.

¶12. Release all detainees who have not been convicted on any charge, by any party detaining the, and exhort all efforts to orient those released to carrying messages of love, peace and tolerance amongst their communities.

¶13. Continue the normalization process and do not use issues related to the process of normalization for political purposes.

¶14. Activate the Property Claims Commission and provide it with necessary financial resources, judges and establish a special Cassation Commission.

¶15. Ban demographic changes that could lead to new realities and proceed with just treatment of previous changes.

¶16. Address (abolish) all abuses that have taken place after 9 April 2003 all over Iraq, and submit these to the legal rules.

¶17. Take into consideration the situation in areas included in Article 140, and not attempt to change power balances in these areas by arming civilians.

¶18. Economic factors should be stressed and the living standards of the citizens of diverse areas improved by eliminating unemployment and creating job opportunities on an equal basis for all society,s components.

¶19. Allocate an extraordinary budget and give priority to

regions with diversity.

¶20. Increase the percentage of Cheldo-Assyrian members in the Governorate Councils and the Parliament, so as to compensate for events of the previous elections.

¶21. Recommend the donor countries, United Nations and other international humanitarian organizations to contribute to the reconstruction of the city of Kirkuk and other areas covered by article 140, and bring back life in them.

¶22. An Iraqi solution achieved according to the Constitution and taking into account the complexity of the matter, with the technical support of UNAMI, should be politically supported and guaranteed by the international community, if it is so wished by the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi parties concerned.

End Text  
CROCKER